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MONICA J. FOSTER
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JULIE KEEFE
SUSAN FRIED
Photographers



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415 N. Killingsworth St.,
P.O. Box 5455, Portland, OR 97228.
Telephone (503) 285-5555.

E-mail: info@theskanner.com

World Wide Web site:

<http://www.theskanner.com>

Fax: (503) 285-2900

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Gov. Brewer: Arrest This Woman!

PIC of Brewer and Obama with outline: Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer gets in President Obama's face. Whatever happened to civility?

Politics can be ugly. But what happened on the tarmac in Mesa last Wednesday was simply a disgrace. Within minutes of President Obama exiting Air Force One, Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer was pointing a wagging finger at him, inches from his face. Excuse me! This is the President of the United States of America. Put the finger away, lady.

Frankly, if I'd been in the president's shoes, I would have been tempted to alert security and have her arrested under the Patriot Act if necessary. President Obama was more gracious. He ignored the insult and moved on.

South Carolina Rep. Joe Wilson also should have known better. In Sept. 2009, he disrupted Obama's health care speech to Congress by yelling out "You lie!" The leaders of his own party made him apologize.

Wilson and Brewer are elected officials engaged in official business. Their behavior should

FROM THE PUBLISHER

Bernie Foster



set an example of respect for the office of President of the United States. That they failed to do so is deeply disturbing.

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An atmosphere of disrespect feeds sickness and hatred. An atmosphere of hatred encourages violence. Could Brewer have learned nothing from the shooting in her own state that killed six people and wounded 13 others, including Rep. Gabrielle Giffords?

If those who are supposed to lead us cannot or will not set a

tone of civility and respect for one another, then who will? Political differences don't excuse a bad attitude.

Like other presidents before him, President Obama faces real threats to his life every day. Presidents Lincoln, Garfield, McKinley and Kennedy all were assassinated. Presidents Roosevelt and Reagan narrowly escaped. And these are just the attempts that came closest to succeeding.

The Secret Service reported

in 2009 that President Obama faces 400 times more death threats than President Bush. He is threatened with death 30 times every day.

Just in the last few weeks we note that:

Andrew Adler, owner and publisher of the Atlanta Jewish Times, suggested that Israel should "order a hit" on Presi-

dent Obama. Now he says he regrets it. But what was he thinking in the first place?

Veteran police Sergeant Pat Shearer of Peoria, Ariz., posted a photo to his Facebook page that showed six armed teenagers holding an Obama teeshirt riddled with bullets. He called it a political statement.

Jules Manson, a 2011 city council candidate in Carson City Calif., made a death threat toward the president and his entire family – using the most racist language imaginable. He apologized – sort of.

Such behavior hurts all Americans. When our leaders disrespect the president, it sends a message to our friends around the world – and to our enemies. Why should they respect the President of the United States if we don't?

Was Brewer's behavior acceptable? Or should she have been arrested?

What do you think?

You can post your comments on www.theskanner.com



Obama Literally in Gun Sights

The bullet-riddled tee shirt of President Obama posted brazenly on Facebook by seven semi-automatic gun toting men among them a Peoria, Ariz., police sergeant was much more than the by now standard non-stop litany of racist cartoons, depictions, web postings, and kooky loose talk threats against President Obama. The gun-toting men and the police sergeant were taking target practice on the president's likeness at an undisclosed desert locale. This is Arizona. The state where many legislators think it's ok to pack guns in the legislature, and for citizens to openly pack them in public. This is the state where former Arizona congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords was nearly killed in an assassination attempt, and where there's a wide body of respectable opinion starting with a finger in the face of the president by Governor Jan Brewer, that openly loathes the president's policies and in many cases him personally. The gun-toting men made a virtual public call for the gunning down of the president.

It comes against the backdrop of Secret Service reports that the rate of threats against the President Obama has increased 400 percent from the 3,000 a year or so under President George W. Bush. He receives dozens of assassination threats continuously, and that number has been steady before and during the campaign and increased after he took office. Federal law is very clear on Threatening the President of the United States. It is a class D felony under United States Code Title 18, Section 871. It consists of knowingly and willfully mailing or otherwise making "any threat to take the life of, to kidnap, or to inflict bodily



THE LAST WORD

Earl Ofari Hutchinson

harm upon the President of the United States."

The Secret Service has taken the threats against the president seriously and has diligently investigated every one of them. In a few cases, prosecutors have brought charges. But here is the problem, in fact several problems. How seriously do other public officials take them, especially in places like

The concern over Obama's safety has been intense since he announced he would seek the presidency in February 2007

Peoria, Arizona? Peoria, Arizona, officials did not suspend the police sergeant pending review and investigation, let alone fire him or call for a prosecution of him or his gun toting pals. Their weak, duck and dodge response was at worst that he may have violated the police department's employee conduct rules on the use of social media. There was no immediate response from Peoria, Arizona, Mayor Bob Barrett or Peoria, city council persons to calls for them to take action against the officer and men involved.

The Secret Service also has had other worries, namely about staffing. At one point, in 2010 there was a report that in a budget

request the Secret Service was understaffed and under-resourced. The Service denied it and insisted it had the resources and personnel to meet any security issue involving the president. But the president's hands on meet the people routine during his non-stop road travels throughout the country is a constant challenge to any protective and enforcement agency.

The concern over Obama's safety has been intense since he announced he would seek the presidency in February 2007. He had the dubious distinction of being the earliest presidential contender to be assigned Secret Service protection on the campaign trail. This

didn't ease the jitters over his safety. Several congressional members even then demanded that Secret Service officials provide all the resources and personnel they could to ensure Obama's and the other presidential candidates' security. They heard the whispers and nervous questions from his constituents about Obama's safety.

During the presidential campaign in 2008, the flood of crank, crackpot, and screwball threats that promised murder and mayhem toward Obama continued to pour in. This prompted the Secret Service to tighten security and take even more elaborate measures to ensure his safety. This was especially important given the

deep doubt and even paranoid suspicion that some blacks have that shadowy government agencies were complicit in the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr, and the fervent belief of millions of other Americans that the CIA or other government agencies were deeply complicit in the killing, if not outright murder of JFK.

There is nothing shadowy or conspiratorial about what police sergeant Pat Shearer and his gun-packing friends in Peoria, Arizona, did. It was brazen and very open. The clueless Shearer for his part saw nothing inappropriate, let alone, dangerous, about what he did. He chalked it up to much ado about nothing or as he put it, he didn't think that shooting up a t-shirt with President Obama's face on it "was that big a deal." It was more than a big deal. The target in their in gun sights was not a regular bullseye, a likeness of Howdy Dowdy, or a cactus plant. It was President Obama. Federal prosecutors should see it as the "big deal" that it is and bring charges.

Earl Ofari Hutchinson is an author and political analyst. He is a weekly co-host of the Al Sharpton Show on American Urban Radio Network. He is the author of How Obama Governed: The Year of Crisis and Challenge. He is an associate editor of New America Media. He is host of the weekly Hutchinson Report Newsmaker Hour heard weekly on the nationally network broadcast Hutchinson Newsmaker Network. Follow Earl Ofari Hutchinson on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/earl-hutchinson>